

**CCC Meeting Highlights**  
**April 7, 2004**  
**Berkshire Community College**

**Welcome:**

Angela Bonarrigo reviewed the meeting agenda and asked everyone to introduce him or herself.

**Updates:**

**EPA**

1 2 Mile Reach: Dean Tagliaferro reported that work continues in the 1 ½ Mile Reach where EPA is working just downstream of the Elm Street bridge where riverbank soils are being excavated and is 1/3 of the way through the project with 37,000 cubic yards of materials excavated from the river. The targeted completion date is 2007. In response to a question, Dean explained that the excavated material is processed and then 50,000 cubic yards are placed in the OPCA's (on plant consolidation areas) and 50,000 cubic yards is being sent off site for disposal. At this time, off-site disposal is in NH and NY.

Rest of River:

Susan Svirskey updated the group on the status of the Peer Reviews for both the Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessments. The responsiveness summary for the ERA is being put together. The modeling framework is going to the print shop for printing. A presentation on EPA's responsiveness summary for the HHRA peer review panel comments will be made later in the meeting.

**GE**

Residential: Dick Gates reported on the status of the residential cleanup program and noted that the residential numbers remain the same as they did in February: 344 properties have been sampled, 174 properties have been remediated to date, and 3 are scheduled for 2004.

Newell Street I: GE started remediation in the fall on Ravin Auto, Quality Printing, and the Italian American Club and work resumes the week of April 19<sup>th</sup>. These properties will be restored and GE will continue working down Newell Street to complete the remediation of additional properties this construction season.

Lyman Street, Oxbows J & K and Oxbows A & C: Nearing completion of sampling phase and transitioning into remedial design.

Floodplain Properties: Sampling has been completed on Phase I and II properties and no remediation is needed. GE has just started sampling the Phase III properties (Dawes to Pomeroy Ave. which includes 26 residential properties).

Brownfields: John Novotny reported that GE is working on the 40's complex and pre-demolition mobilization and asbestos removal. This will take place through most of 2004 with demolition to follow. A request for proposals has gone out for the demolition of buildings 61, 62, and 66 and GE will start pre-demolition mobilization this year.

Plant Site: John Novotny updated that GE is conducting soil investigations in the Unkamet Brook area and has submitted the investigation plan for Hill 78, which is the last area remaining to be investigated.

Silver Lake: Mike Carroll noted that GE has committed to make a presentation to the CCC on Silver Lake and still plans to do so once things are ready. At this time, GE continues to review data and the investigative report. There might be a potential pilot program before a plan is put together for Silver Lake.

Dave Gibbs asked if the Oxbows are included in Newell area. Yes.

Caleb Mitchell asked about whether the Dalton Ave. property is under the CD. It is not. It is under the state program. GE has sampled Dalton Ave. and is waiting to hear back from DEP as to whether or not they require more sampling.

Tim Gray asked if in any properties near the river is GE finding samples indicating free product? The answer was no.

## **MA DEP**

Susan Steenstrup followed up on two items raised at the February meeting. A series of AUL notifications from the Berkshire Eagle, which Barbara Cinafarini had brought to the February meeting, and a question from Tim Gray about PCB levels at the Commercial Street Site.

All but one of the AUL announcements were fuel oil releases: two at residential properties, one at a school, and one commercial / industrial. The fifth AUL notice was for a PCB release at a GE-owned property under the residential fill program (as stated at the February CCC meeting).

PCBs levels at Commercial Street range from low, non-detect and about 10 ppm, 290 ppm at 1 – 3 feet, 1,800 ppm at 4 – 6 feet. There was one hit of 4,700 in a 1 – 3 foot sample. All but one of the sampling locations with higher PCB concentrations are below pavement.

Anna Symington, Deputy Director for the western MA DEP office, also attended the meeting and updated the group on the small airplane that crashed in the Unkamet Brook wetlands on the site. DEP oversaw the cleanup of the crash and the emptying of the fuel tanks, removed and sampled soils and also took post excavation samples. DEP is awaiting the results of these samples before disposing of the soil. Backfilling of the area has been delayed because of rain.

Anna also updated the group on the investigation of Moorewood Lake. DEP is reviewing preliminary results and so far it does not appear that PCBs are an issue. There are no PCBs in the water. PCB levels in the sediments are low. DEP is looking at background and other information and reviewing the country club's risk analysis.

## **NRD**

Dean Tagliaferro presented the NRD update, as Dale Young was unable to attend the meeting. The trustees have solicited and received bids for a restoration coordinator. They will evaluate the bids before awarding a contract. Regarding the potential boardwalk along the river in Pittsfield, the trustees were willing to finance the boardwalk but further discussions and cost escalations due to construction challenges led the City to decide against the boardwalk at this time. All parties have put it on hold and are willing to evaluate the project later along with all of the other proposed projects.

Caleb Mitchell added that the City is interested in redirecting NRD monies elsewhere.

## **Presentations:**

**EPA's Responsiveness Summary for the Human Health Risk Assessment:** Jim DiLorenzo made a presentation on EPA's responsiveness summary to the peer review panel comments for the Human Health Risk Assessment. He announced that the responsiveness summary was released last week and is in repositories and will be on the website shortly.

A final risk assessment will be released later this summer.

The HHRA looked at exposure and risk in the rest of river considering exposure and risk via recreation, residential, agriculture and fish and waterfowl consumption. Jim took the group through EPA's response to the fourteen areas of comments by the panel.

### **Questions:**

Tim Gray mentioned that HRI commented on the DPH blood study before and asked if EPA will revisit the study and reference numbers used by DPH. Tim went on to explain that DPH considered 4ppb normal, which HRI disagrees with. HRI believes that 1.5 ppb was the accepted background number and that the 4 ppb number is out of date and the study is flawed considering that levels of 4 – 8 ppb would have been three times higher than the 1.5 ppb. However, DPH never acknowledged flaws in the study. Tim asked if EPA would look at this vis a vis background of 1.5 ppb.

Susan Svirsky replied that DPH would not release the underlying blood serum data to EPA. EPA will have to accept their numbers. EPA will look at the literature. Tim asked why DPH will not release the data and Svirsky replied that this is DPH policy, however EPA will compare DPH numbers to updated national numbers for background.

**Groundwater Monitoring and NAPL Recovery:** Mike Nalipinski made a presentation on the groundwater monitoring and NAPL recovery program at the facility.

As part of the groundwater monitoring and NAPL recovery effort, the facility has been divided into five groundwater management areas. Nalipinski explained how the monitoring program works in each management area and discussed the NAPL recovery effort that has resulted in over one million gallons of PCB oil and coal gasification liquid has been recovered to date.

## Questions:

Tim Gray asked about plumes on East Street Area 1 in the residential area and whether it is safe in the basements in this residential neighborhood.

Mike Nalipinski explained that the plume has been drawn back across East Street and the concentrations in groundwater are not impacting residential basements. EPA continues to monitor wells in the residential neighborhood.

Tim Gray then asked if there is a program for monitoring the sump pumps in people's basements.

GE responded that the two houses that GE bought years ago are now a commercial business. Also, GE has submitted a plan to DEP that will involve talking to folks about sampling their sump pumps in the residential area.

GE and DEP agreed to talk about the results from this effort at a future meeting.

Barbara Cianfarini raised a concern about what was found near Hill 78 and are we confident it would have been there before or is it leaching from Hill 78?

Mike Nalipinski responded that we noticed this a few years ago and it is low on the list of concerns, however EPA is watching it and it appears not to have changed and the contaminant concentrations remain consistent.

Dave Gibbs asked what the life expectancy of sheetpile is.

Dean Tagliaferro replied that the life expectancy is a minimum 50 years but maybe longer.

Dave Gibbs then asked if there is a plan to replace it to which Tagliaferro responded that if in 50 years we see sheet piling deteriorating, it could be replaced.

## Future Meetings:

The group decided to cancel the Wednesday, May 5<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The annual site tour is scheduled for Wednesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

The group, per tradition, decided not to schedule meetings for either July or August.

## Action Items:

1. **EPA:** In lieu of CCC meetings, EPA will plan to get the calibration and modeling report and comment period information out to the group and wider public.
2. **GE:** Once completed, GE will present the Silver Lake reports at an upcoming CCC meeting.